



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Issue 142 – January 16, 2007

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning,

This week, we are excited to welcome AOT's trade representatives from Japan, Mexico and the United Kingdom to Arizona. They are in town to attend a Communications Committee meeting in Chandler on Friday, which is a quarterly gathering of travel industry marketing professionals from around the state. As everyone is gearing up their planning for Fiscal Year 2008, this is the perfect time to bring our representatives to Arizona to discuss international marketing strategies for the upcoming year in each of the markets. By doing it at the communications committee meeting, AOT can learn about the priorities and plans of our partners around the state so we can use that to guide our overall strategy. It is important for our representatives to hear from our partners so they have a clear understanding of what they're trying to achieve, thereby creating more synergy in Arizona's international presence. I'm also pleased to welcome our representatives to the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council meeting on Thursday at AOT where they will be sharing the latest information about their markets with TAC members. Arizona's presence in key international markets is greatly augmented by the support of our partners around the state, so we look forward to working with them to strengthen our international marketing activities.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann Director Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) FY 2008 Certification Workshops – SAVE the DATE

The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to present our FY 2008 Teamwork for Effective Arizona Marketing (TEAM) Certification workshops. TEAM workshops are designed to provide comprehensive information on AOT's matching grant program and the applications process. To further assist communities and organization with their tourism planning and development, this year's workshop will also include information on how to develop a marketing plan. AOT offers the opportunity to attend a workshop in one of five Arizona communities: Phoenix, Sierra Vista, Kingman, Flagstaff, and Show Low. Workshop attendance is mandatory for those organizations who wish to apply for matching grant funding for FY 2008. To RSVP for a workshop, please contact Sarah Martins at 602-364-3687 or via email at smartins@azot.gov. Please see below dates and locations, more information to follow.

Phoenix

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Sierra Vista

Thursday, February 15, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Kingman

Tuesday, February 20, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Flagstaff

Thursday, February 22, 2007

1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Show Low

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Arizona Game and Fish Department Sponsors “Economic Benefits of Nature” Tourism Workshop

Did you know the total annual economic effect of wildlife viewing in Arizona is \$1.5 billion? That includes more than \$820 million in retail sales. In fact, watchable wildlife recreation generates more than 15,000 full- and part-time jobs in our state. Nature tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and watchable wildlife participants in Arizona outnumber the combined populations of Montana and Wyoming. Therefore, the Arizona Game and Fish Department is excited to sponsor “How You and Your Community Can Profit from Nature Tourism.” The workshop will be presented by Watchable Wildlife, Inc., a national nonprofit organization that helps

communities capitalize on their natural assets to improve the local economy. Topics of the workshop will include: the impact nature tourism has on state and local economies; how to promote wildlife tourism and build community support; and how to build a planning team to ensure successful implementation of nature tourism efforts. The clinic has been conducted from Iowa to Russia with positive results. For more information, contact Joe Yarchin at (602) 789-3589 or via email at jyarchin@azgfd.gov.

When: January 26, 2007, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Where: La Quinta Inn, 2510 W. Greenway Road, Phoenix, AZ 85023

Cost: \$35 includes materials, snacks and lunch

Maximum attendance: 50 people

Promoting - AZ - Advertising

Be a Part of the Super Bowl Game Ball Tour

In anticipation of Super Bowl XLII, the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee, along with the Arizona Office of Tourism, is working to develop ways for the citizens of our state to become involved in the excitement of the big game. One of the planned events will be a Super Bowl XLII game ball tour that would take the spirit and thrill of the Super Bowl throughout our state, leading up to the game itself on February 3, 2008. In order to coordinate a successful and well-orchestrated route, we are asking for your help. The concept would be to use the ball in parades (i.e. Grand Marshall carries ball along parade route), transportation (ball is carried on railway, boat, hot air balloon, off-road jeep, mule, etc.), festivals (ball is incorporated in festivities), traditions, special events, landmarks, historic sites, etc. Please take a moment to brainstorm how your community could be a part of this unique tour and help bring the exhilaration of Super Bowl XLII to the entire state of Arizona. For more information, including a Super Bowl Game Ball Tour application form, please contact Troy Thompson at tthompson@azot.gov or 602-364-3699.

Industry News

U.S. Image Overseas to Get New Focus

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will announce today the creation of a new annual award to honor a company, academic institution or other nongovernmental entity that does the most to promote the U.S. image abroad through intercultural understanding, The Washington Post reports. The Benjamin Franklin Award for Public Diplomacy is designed to prod corporations and other nongovernmental groups to play a bigger role in public diplomacy at a time when the image of the U.S. government has been battered by a backlash, especially in the Arab world, from the invasion of Iraq. Rice will highlight the award during a speech at a conference of public relations organizations at the State Department. During that meeting, the group will select the 10 best ways that the private sector can promote understanding between the U.S. and people around the world. (Page A4, Washington Post)

TIA to Lure British visitors with Discover America Magazine

To reinforce its new "Discover America" brand, the Travel Industry Association will unveil "Discover America Magazine" for insertion in newspapers when the campaign launches in March. The marketing campaign previously appeared under the "See America" banner. Maintaining its advertising presence in the U.K., TIA has renewed its marketing partnership with Custom Marketing Group, the Atlanta-based company that has designed and implemented the campaign for more than six years. The U.K. remains America's leading source of overseas vacationers, with more than 4.3 million arrivals in 2005. Details at 202-408-2183. (Special to TA)

Top Ten Trends in Booming Baby Travel Market

The leisure travel industry is about to boom thanks to the Baby Boomers coming of age and having more free time and the desire to travel, according to Lauraday Kelley, CTC, MCC, vice president Education & Training for Vacation.com. She said: "With more free time on their hands and the desire to participate in such activities that may have been previously unattainable, the travel industry will see a remarkable growth in the leisure segment over the next 18 years as more and more Boomers have the freedom and time to spend money more freely." Ms Kelley made her remarks at this year's Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality (SATH) 11th World Congress held at the Miami Airport Hilton. She said there are 76 million Baby Boomers. The generation of Baby Boomers has been defined by sociologists as those born between the years of 1946 and 1964 putting this generation between 42 and 60 years old. They now make up 28 percent of the US's population.

Top ten trends as seen by Ms Kelley:

- Family vacations will continue to grow at a faster rate than all other forms of leisure travel as parents and grandparents look at travel as a way to reunite families in a high-stress world dominated by demanding work responsibilities.
- With baby boomers becoming more anxious to be pampered and entertained in a controlled environment, and cruise lines portraying cruises as destinations not just ships, there will be a tremendous increase in cruise vacations.
- Interest in spa vacations will continue to grow as those in the work force look for ways to manage the mounting stress in their lives, and exhibit a growing desire to detox the body and mind.
- All inclusive pricing (one price for a bundle of basic services) will grow in popularity beyond cruise lines and all inclusive resorts as more consumers on fixed incomes want greater control over their travel expenses.
- The new lifestyle hotel brands such as NYLO and ALOFT will continue to gain both exposure and popularity among the next generation of travelers, as well as the baby boomers who wish to look, act, and feel like the millennium generation.
- There will be a tremendous increase in adventure travel with distinctions between those who really want to experience life on the edge and those older Boomers who want to think they are experiencing the edge, but with moderation and comfort.

- Religious travel will continue to be a growing trend as a large number of consumers are taking pilgrimages to religious destinations.
- The Internet will continue to be an online travel research and planning tool, whereas Internet usage to book reservations will continue to grow at a significantly lower rate than that of the past three years.
- Comparison shopping will become even more commonplace as consumers discover and use the latest search engine options to eliminate the maze of misinformation that clutters many Websites.
- The travel agent will not become an endangered species. Because of their travel experience and expertise and their personal insight into the best-value deals, whether it is package tours, cruises, hotels, bed and breakfast accommodations, domestic and foreign airlines, special client needs and much more, the retail agent will still be highly sought after.

(Report by David Wilkening, Special to TravelMole - The Online Community for the Travel and Tourism Industry)

AAA to Offer Online List of Local Gas Stations

AAA says its AAA.com online travel planning tool is the first to provide the locations and fuel prices for approximately two-thirds of the nation's local gasoline stations. AAA recently added data for almost 100,000 U.S. gas stations to its TripTik travel planner. Using data from the Oil Price Information Service, locations are updated weekly and multiple-grade fuel prices are updated four times daily. AAA said the feature will be a big help to the more than 2.5 million motorists who will need emergency fuel delivery this year because their cars run out of gas while traveling. *(Special to TA)*

Mild Winter Offering Travel Deals

With golfers hitting the links near Chicago and kayakers paddling the usually frozen lakes of Maine, a correspondingly low "cabin fever quotient" is translating to cooler sales--and a smattering of lower rates--at some warm-weather spots. Hotel rates are holding strong in such snowbird favorites as Florida and the greater Phoenix area, and current deals on Caribbean cruises have been spurred more by worries over the housing downturn and a lackluster economy--along with confusion over whether new passport rules apply--than by an unusually mild winter. But "heading into peak season, we're seeing a startling number of airfare sales" to sunny destinations, says Josh Roberts of SmarterTravel.com. Both AirTran and Spirit are discounting winter fares to Florida and the Caribbean, he notes. *(Page 1D, USA Today)*

ASTA Launches New Membership Structure, Revamps Image

The American Society of Travel Agents this week officially launched a new structure that provides for two membership levels; it also rolled out a new logo, new approach to the name itself, revised slogan and revised mission and vision statements. The new membership structure includes a new Premium Travel Agency membership category at

\$2,500, and a Travel Agent membership category, which costs \$250. The moves are part of an overall effort to revitalize ASTA and create better opportunities for its agent members. So far, 57 agency groups have signed up for the Premium Travel Agent category. (*ModernAgent.com*, 1/11; *Travel Weekly.com*, 1/10)